

# THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

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## Contents of this No. of the National Register.

Correspondence between commodores Decatur and Barron, 207 to 221. Congressional Proceedings, 221 to 231.

Our readers are already informed of the fatal result of the meeting between Commodore Decatur and Barron, that took place near Bladensburg on the 22d ult. where the former was mortally wounded, and expired about twelve hours after the duel, at his residence in this city; and the latter tho' severely wounded is now doing well. The topic having excited such general attention, throughout the union, we have thought a publication of the letters that led to the misunderstanding would be generally acceptable.

## THE FATAL DUEL.

This week we have occupied our paper chiefly with a correspondence which passed between Commodore DECATUR and BARRON, previous to the late fatal catastrophe:—The letters are here given entire, as we find them published by the friends of the former gentleman, (in a pamphlet form, just issued from the press of Messrs. Gales and Seaton)—and leave the reader to make up his mind on the merits of the controversy, without comment on our part; though we may be allowed to add, from an intelligent and highly respectable source, that there exists other letters, omitted in this collection, that have an equal bearing on the elucidation of this interesting subject, which, perhaps, we may hereafter publish.

*Correspondence between the late Commodore Stephen Decatur and Commodore James Barron, which led to the unfortunate Meeting on the 22d of March.*

No. 1.

Hampton, Va. June 12, 1819.

SIR—I have been informed, in Norfolk, that you have said that you could insult me with impunity, or words of that effect. If you have said so, you will no doubt avow it, and I shall expect to hear from you. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BARRON.

To Com. Stephen Decatur, Washington.

No. 2.

Washington, 17th June, 1819.

SIR—I have received your communication of the 12th inst. Before you could have been entitled to the information you have asked of me, you should have given up the name of your informer. That frankness which ought to characterise our profession required it. I shall not, however, refuse to answer you on that account, but shall be as candid in my communication to you as your letter or the case will warrant.

Whatever I may have thought, or said, in the very frequent and free conversations I have had respecting you and your conduct, I feel a thorough conviction that I never could have been guilty of so much egotism as to say that "I could insult you" (or any other man) "with impunity." I am, sir, your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

To Com. James Barron, Hampton, Vir.

No. 3.

Hampton, Vir. June 25th, 1819.

SIR—Your communication of the 17th inst. in answer to mine of the 13th, I have received.

The circumstances that urged me to call on you for information requested in my letter, would, I presume, have instigated you, or any other person, to the same conduct that I pursued. Several gentlemen in Norfolk, not your enemies, nor actuated by any malicious motive, told me that such a report was in circulation, but could not now be traced to its origin. I, therefore, concluded to appeal to you, supposing under such circumstances, that I could not outrage any rule of decorum or candor. This, I trust, will be considered as a just motive for the course I have pursued. Your declaration, if I understand it correctly, relieves my mind from the apprehension that you had so degraded my character, as I had been induced to alledge. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BARRON.

To Com. Stephen Decatur, Washington.

No. 4.

Washington, June 29, 1819.

SIR—I have received your communication of the 25th, in answer to mine of the 17th, and, as you have expressed yourself doubtfully, as to your correct understanding of my letter of the aforesaid date, I have now to state, and I request you to understand distinctly, that I meant no more than to disclaim the specific and particular expression to which your enquiry was directed, to wit: that I had said that I could insult you with impunity. As to the motives of the "several gentlemen in Norfolk," your informants, or the rumors which "cannot be traced to their origin," on which their information was founded, or who they are, is a matter of perfect indifference to me, as is also your motives in making such an inquiry on such information.

Your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

To Com. James Barron, Hampton, Vir.

## No. 5.

Hampton, Oct. 23, 1819.

Sir—I had supposed that the measure of your ambition was nearly completed, and that your good fortune had rendered your reputation for acts of magnanimity too dear to be risked wantonly on occasions that never can redound to the honor of him that would be great. I had also concluded that your rancour towards me was fully satisfied, by the cruel and unmerited sentence passed upon me by the court of which you were a member; and, after an exile from my country, family and friends, of nearly seven years, I had concluded that I should now be allowed, at least, to enjoy that solace, with this society, that lacerated feelings like mine, required, and that you would have suffered me to remain in quiet possession of those enjoyments; but, scarcely had I set my foot on my native soil, ere I learnt that the same malignant spirit which had before influenced you to endeavor to ruin my reputation, was still at work, and that you were ungenerously traducing my character whenever an occasion occurred which suited your views, and, in many instances, not much to your credit as an officer through the medium of our juniors; such conduct cannot fail to produce an injurious effect on the discipline and subordination of the navy. A report of this sort, sir, coming from the respectable and creditable sources it did, could not fail to arrest my attention, and to excite those feelings which might naturally be expected to arise in the heart of every man who professes to entertain principles of honor, and intends to act in conformity with them. With such feelings I addressed a letter to you under date of the 13th June last, which produced a correspondence between us, which I have since been informed you have endeavored to use to my farther injury, by sending it to Norfolk by a respectable officer of the navy, to be shewn to some of my particular friends, with a view of alienating from me their attachment. I am also informed that you have tauntingly and boasting observed, that you would cheerfully meet me in the field, and hoped I would yet act like a man, or that you had used words to that effect: such conduct, sir, on the part of any one, but especially one occupying the influential station under the government which you hold, towards an individual situated as I am, and oppressed as I have been, and that chiefly by your means, is unbecoming you as an officer and a gentleman; and shews a want of magnanimity which, hostile as I have found you to be towards me, I had hoped for your own reputation you possessed. It calls loudly for redress at your hands: I consider you as having

given the invitation, which I accept, and will prepare to meet you at such time and place as our respective friends, hereafter to be named, shall designate. I also, under all the circumstances of the case, consider myself entitled to the choice of weapons, place, and distance; but should a difference of opinion be entertained by our friends, I flatter myself, from your known personal courage, that you would disdain any unfair advantage, which your superiority in the use of the pistol, and the natural defect in my vision, increased by age, would give you. I will thank you not to put your name on the cover of your answer, as, I presume, you can have no disposition to give unnecessary pain to the females of my family. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BARRON.

Com. Stephen Decatur, Washington.

## No. 6.

Washington, 31st. Oct. 1819.

Sir—Your letter of the 23d inst. has been duly received. Prior to giving it that reply which I intend, its contents suggest the necessity of referring to our June correspondence.

On the 12th June last, you addressed to me a note, inquiring whether I had said that "I could insult you with impunity." On the 17th June, I wrote to you, in reply, as follows: "Whatever I may have thought or said in the very frequent and free conversations I have had respecting you and your conduct, I feel a thorough conviction that I never could have been guilty of so much egotism, as to say that I could insult you, or any other man, with impunity."

On the 25th of June, you again wrote to me, and stated, that the report on which you had grounded your query of 12th of June, "could not now be traced to its origin," and your letter is concluded in the following words: "your declaration, if I understand it correctly, relieves my mind from the apprehension that you had so degraded my character, as I had been induced to alledge." Immediately on receiving your letter of the 25th June, I wrote to you 29th June as follows: "As you have expressed yourself doubtfully as to your correct understanding of my letter of the 17th June, I have now to state, and I request you to understand, distinctly, that I meant no more than to disclaim the specific and particular expression, to which your inquiry was directed, to wit: "that I had said that I could insult you with impunity." Here ended our June correspondence, and with it, all kind of communication, till the date of your letter of the 23d inst. which I shall now proceed to notice.

Nearly four months having elapsed since

the date of our last correspondence, your letter was unexpected to me, particularly as the terms used by you, in the conclusion of your letter to me of 25th June, and your silence since receiving my letter of 29th June, indicated as I thought, satisfaction on your part. But, it seems that you consider yourself aggrieved by my sending our June correspondence to Norfolk. I did not send the June correspondence to Norfolk until three months had expired after your last communication, and not then, until I had been informed by a captain of the navy, that a female of your acquaintance had stated, that such a correspondence had taken place.\* If that correspondence has, in any degree, "alienated your friends from you," such effect is to be attributed to the correspondence itself. I thought the papers would speak for themselves, and sent them without written comment.

With respect to the court martial upon you for the affair of the Chesapeake, to which you have been pleased to refer, I shall not treat the officers, who composed that court, with so much disrespect, as to attempt a vindication of their proceedings. The chief magistrate of our country approved them; the nation approved them; and the sentence has been carried into effect. But, sir, there is apart of my conduct on that occasion, which it does not appear irrelevant to revive in your recollection. It is this; I was present at the court of inquiry upon you, and heard the evidence then adduced for and against you; thence I drew an opinion altogether unfavorable to you; and, when I was called upon, by the Secretary of the Navy, to act as member of the court martial ordered for your trial, I begged to be excused the duty, on the ground of my having formed such an opinion. The honorable Secretary was pleased to insist on my serving; still anxious to be relieved from this service, I did, prior to my taking my seat as a member of the court, communicate to your able advocate, general Taylor, the opinion I had formed, and my correspondence with the Navy Department upon the subject, in order to afford you an opportunity, should you deem it expedient, to protest against my being a member. On the ground of my not only having formed, but expressed an opinion unfavorable to you. You did not protest against my being a member. Duty constrained me, however unpleasant it was, to take my seat as a member; I did so, and discharged the duty imposed upon me. You, I find, are incapable of estimating the motives which guided my conduct in this transaction.

\*See the extract from Capt. Carter's letter

For my conduct as a member of that court martial, I do not consider myself as, in any way, accountable to you. But, sir, you have thought fit to deduce, from your impressions of my conduct as a member of that court martial, inferences of personal hostility towards you. Influenced by feelings thence arising, you commenced the June correspondence, a correspondence which I had hoped would have terminated our communications.

Between you and myself, there never has been a personal difference, but I have entertained, and do still entertain the opinion, that your conduct as an officer, since the affair of the Chesapeake, has been such as ought to forever bar your re-admission into the service.

In my letter to you, of the 17th June, although I disavowed the particular expressions to which you invited my attention, and/or required that I should apprise you of my not having been silent respecting you. I informed you that I had had *very frequent and free conversations respecting you and your conduct*; and the words were underscored, that they might not fail to attract your particular attention. Had you have asked what those frequent and free conversations were, I should, with the same frankness, have told you; but, instead of making a demand of this kind, you reply to my letter of 17th June, "That my declaration, if correctly understood by you, relieved your mind," &c. That you might correctly understand what I did mean, I addressed you, as before observed, on the 29th June, and endeavoured, by *underscoring* certain precise terms, to convey to you my precise meaning. To this last letter I never received a reply.

Under these circumstances, I have judged it expedient at this time to state, as distinctly as may be in my power, the facts upon which I ground the unfavorable opinion which I entertain, and have expressed, of your conduct as an officer, since the court martial upon you; while I disclaim all personal enmity towards you.

Some time after you had been suspended from the service, for your conduct in the affair of the Chesapeake, you proceeded, in a merchant brig, from Norfolk to Pernambuco; and by a communication from the late captain Lewes, whose honor and veracity were never questioned, it appears—that you stated to Mr. Lyon, the *British consul* at Pernambuco, with whom you lived, "That if the Chesapeake had been prepared for action you would not have resisted the attack of the Leopard; assigning, as a reason, that you knew, (as did also our government,) there were deserters on board your ship; that the President of the

United States knew there were deserters on board, and of the intention of the British to take them; and that the President caused you to go out in a defenceless state, for the express purpose of having your ship attacked and disgraced, and thus attain his favorite object of involving the United States in a war with Great Britain." For confirmation of this information, captain Lewis refers to Mr. Thomas Goodwin of Baltimore, the brother of captain Ridgely, of the Navy, who received it from Mr. Lyon himself. Reference was made to Mr. Goodwin, who, in an official communication, confirmed all that captain Lewis had said. The veracity and respectability of Mr. Goodwin are also beyond question. You will be enabled to judge of the impression made upon captain Lewis' mind, by the following strong remarks he made on the subject:

"I am now convinced that Barron is a traitor, for I can call by no other name a man who would talk in this way to an Englishman, and an Englishman in office."

These communications are now in the archives of the Navy Department.

If, sir, the affair of the Chesapeake excited the indignant feelings of the nation towards Great Britain; and was, as every one admits one of the principal causes which produced the late war, did it not behoove you to take an active part in the war, for your own sake?—Patriotism out of the question! But, sir, instead of finding you in the foremost ranks, on an occasion which so emphatically demanded your best exertions, it is said, and is credited that you were, after the commencement of the war, to be found in the command of a vessel sailing under *British license*. Though urged, by your friends to avail yourself of some one of the opportunities which were every day occurring, in privateers, or other fast sailing merchant vessels, sailing from France and other places, to return to your country during the war; it is not known that you manifested a disposition to do so, excepting in the single instance by the *cartel* John Adams, in which vessel, you must have known you could not be permitted to return, without violating her character as a cartel.

You say you have been oppressed. You know, sir, that, by absenting yourself, as you did for years, from the country, without leave from the government, you subjected yourself to be stricken from the rolls. You know, also, that, by the 10th article of the act for the better government of the Navy, all persons in the Navy holding intercourse with an enemy, become subject to the severest punishment known to our laws. You have not, for the offences before stated, to my knowledge, re-

ceived even a reprimand; and I do know that your pay, even during your absence, has been continued to you.

As to my having spoken of you injuriously to "junior officers," I have to remark, that such is the state of our service that we have but few seniors. If I speak with officers at all, the probability is, it will be with a junior.

On your return to this country, your efforts to re-establish yourself in the service were known, and became a subject of conversation with officers as well as others. In the many and free conversation I have had respecting you and your conduct, I have said, for the causes above enumerated, that, in my opinion, you ought not to be received again into the naval service; that there was not employment for all the officers who had faithfully discharged their duty to their country in the hour of trial; and that it would be doing an act of injustice to employ you, to the exclusion of any one of them. In speaking thus, and endeavoring to prevent your re-admission, I conceive that I was performing a duty I owe to the service; that I was contributing to the preservation of its respectability. Had you made no effort to be re-employed, after the war, it is more than probable I might not have spoken of you. If you continue your efforts, I shall certainly, from the same feelings of public duty by which I have hitherto been actuated, be constrained to continue the expression of my opinions; and I can assure you, that, in the exchange of opinions with other officers respecting you, I have never met with more than one who did not entirely concur with me.

The objects of your communication of the 23d, as expressed by you, now claim my notice. You profess to consider me as having given you "an invitation." You say that you have been told, that I have "tauntingly and boastfully observed, that I would cheerfully meet you in the field, and hoped you would yet act like a man."

One would naturally have supposed, that after having been so recently led into error by "rumors" which could not be traced, you would have received, with some caution, subsequent rumours; at all events, that you would have endeavored to have traced them, before again venturing to act upon them as if they were true. Had you have pursued this course you would have discovered, that the latter rumors were equally unfounded as the former.

I never invited you to the field; nor have I expressed a hope that you would call me out. I was informed, by a gentleman with whom you had conferred upon the subject, that you left Norfolk for this place, sometime before our June correspondence, with the intention



of calling me out. I then stated to that gentleman, as I have to all others with whom I have conversed upon the subject, that, if you made the call, I would meet you; but that, on all scores, I should be much better pleased to have nothing to do with you. I do not think that fighting duels, under any circumstances, can raise the reputation of any man, and have long since discovered, that it is not even an unerring criterion of personal courage. I should regret the necessity of fighting any man; but, in my opinion, the man who makes arms his profession, is not at liberty to decline an invitation from any person, who is not so far degraded, as to be beneath his notice. Having incautiously said I would meet you, I will not now consider this to be your case, although many think so; and if I had not pledged myself, I might reconsider the case.

As to "weapons, place, and distance," if we are to meet, those points will, as is usual, be committed to the friend I may select on the occasion. As far, however, as it may be left to me, not having any particular arm, distance, or mode, (but, on the contrary, disliking them all,) I should not be found fastidious on those points, but should be rather disposed to yield you any little advantage of this kind. As to my skill in the use of the pistol, it exists more in your imagination than in reality; for the last twenty years I have had but little practice; and the disparity in our ages, to which you have been pleased to refer, is I believe, not more than five or six years. It would have been out of the common course of nature, if the vision of either of us had been improved by years.

From your manner of proceeding, it appears to me, that you have come to the determination to fight some one, and that you have selected me for that purpose; and I must take leave to observe, that your object would have been better attained, had you have made this decision during our late war, when your fighting might have benefitted your country as well as yourself. The style of your communication, and the matter, did not deserve so dispassionate and historical a notice as I have given it; and had I believed it would receive no other inspection than yours, I should have spared myself the trouble. The course I adopted with our former correspondence, I shall pursue with this, if I shall deem it expedient. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

To Com. James Barron, Hampton, Vir.

[EXTRACT.]

Norfolk, 24th August, 1819.

My Dear Commodore: Nothing had transpired here previous to my arrival on the sub-

ject of the correspondence; but a Lady, a Miss \*\*\*\*\* I think her name is, from Hampton, has stated, that a correspondence had taken place between you and B. which she feared would end in a meeting. The fears of this lady are at direct variance with the opinion of your friends here, who think that he does not purpose saying more on the subject.

As it seems that it was known at Hampton, and even here, that letters had passed between you and B. may I venture to ask you to send a copy of them to Mr. Tazewell, who I have just left. He will, with great pleasure, he says, attend to your wishes.

Receive the best wishes of your friend.

W. CARTER.

Commodore DECATUR.

No. 7.

Washington, November, 1819.

Sir: Since my communication to you of the 31st ult. I have been informed by a gentleman entitled to the fullest credit, that you were not afloat till after the peace; consequently, the report which I noticed of your having sailed under British license must be unfounded.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

Com. JAS BARRON.

No. 8.

Hampton, Nov. 30, 1819.

Sir: Unavoidable interruption has prevented my answering your two last communications as early as it was my wish to have done, but in a few days you shall have my reply.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAS. BARRON.

Com. STEPHEN DECATUR.

No. 9.

Hampton, 30th Nov. 1819.

Sir: I did not receive, until Tuesday, the 9th inst., your very lengthy, elaborate, and historical reply, without date, to my letter to you of the 23d ult., which, from its nature and object, did not, I conceive require that you should have entered so much into detail, in defence of the hostile and unmanly course you have pursued towards me, since the "affair of the Chesapeake," as you term it. A much more laconic answer would have served my purpose, which, for the present, is nothing more than to obtain at your hands honorable redress for the accumulated insults which you, sir, in particular, above all my enemies, have attempted to heap upon me, in every shape in which they could be offered. Your last voluminous letter is alone sufficient proof, if none other existed, of the rancorous disposition you entertain towards me, and the

extent to which you have carried it. That letter I should no otherwise notice, than merely to inform you it had reached me, and that I am prepared to meet you in the field upon any thing like fair and equal grounds; but, inasmuch as you have intimated that our correspondence is to go before the public, I feel it a duty I owe to myself, and to the world, to reply particularly to the many calumnious charges and aspersions with which your "dispassionate and historical notice" of my communication so abundantly teems; wishing you, sir, at the same time, "distinctly to understand" that it is not for you alone, or to justify myself in your estimation, that I take this course. You have dwelt much upon our "June correspondence," as you stile it, and have made many quotations from it. I deem it unnecessary, however, to advert to it, further than to remark, that, although "nearly four months" did intervene between that correspondence and my letter of the 23d ultimo, that silence arose not from any misapprehension of the purport of your contumacious "underscored" remarks nor from the malicious designs they indicated, nor from a tame disposition to yield quietly to the operation which either might have against me; but, from a tedious and painful indisposition, which confined me to my bed the chief part of that period, as is well known to almost every person here. I anticipated, however, from what I had found you capable of doing to my injury, the use to which you would endeavour to pervert that correspondence; and have not at all been disappointed. So soon as I was well enough, and heard of your machinations against me, I lost no time in addressing to you my letter of the 23d ultimo; your reply to which I have now more particularly to notice. I have not said, nor did I mean to convey such an idea, nor will my letter bear the interpretation, that your forwarding to Norfolk our "June correspondence" had, "in any degree, alienated my friends from me;" but, that it was sent down there with that view. It is a source of great consolation to me, sir, to know, that I have more friends, both in and out of the navy, than you are aware of; and that it is not in your power, great as you may imagine your official influence to be, to deprive me of their good opinion and affection. As to the reason which seems to have prompted you to send that correspondence to Norfolk, "that a female of my acquaintance had stated that such an one had taken place," I will only remark, that she did not derive her information from me; that it has always been, and ever will be, with me, a principle to touch as delicately as possible, upon reports said to come from females, intended to affect injuriously the cha-

racter of any one; and that, in a correspondence like the *present*, highly as I estimate the sex, I should never think of introducing them as authority. Females, sir, have nothing, or ought to have nothing to do in controversies of this kind. In speaking of the court martial which sat upon my trial, I have cast no imputation or reflection upon the members individually who composed it (saving yourself) which required that you should attempt a vindication of their proceedings; champion as you are, and hostile as some of them may have been to me: nor does the language of my letter warrant any such inference. I merely meant to point out to you, sir, what you appear to have been incapable of perceiving—the indelicacy of your conduct (to say the least of it) in hunting me out as an object for malignant persecution, after having acted as one of my judges, and giving your voice in favor of a sentence against me, which I cannot avoid repeating, was "cruel and unmerited." It is the privilege, sir, of a man deeply injured as I have been by that decision, and conscious of his not deserving it, as I feel myself, to remonstrate against it; and I have taken the liberty to exercise that privilege.

You say that "the proceedings of the Court have been approved by the Chief Magistrate of our country, that the nation approved of them, and that the sentence has been carried into effect." It is true the President of the United States *did* approve of that sentence, and that it was carried into effect—full and complete effect, which I should have supposed ought to have glutted the envious and vengeful disposition of your heart; but I deny that the nation has approved of that sentence, and as an appeal appears likely to be made to them, I am willing to submit the question. The part you took on that occasion, it was totally unnecessary. I assure you, "to revive in my recollection;" it is indelibly imprinted on my mind, and can never, while I have life, be erased. You acknowledge you were present at the Court of Inquiry in my case, "heard the evidence for and against me, and had, therefore, formed and expressed an opinion unfavourable to me," and yet, your conscience was made of such pliable materials, that, *because* the then "honorable Secretary of the Navy was pleased to insist on your serving as a member of the Court Martial, and because I did not protest against it," you conceive that "duty constrained" you, however unpleasant, to take your seat as a member, although you were to act under the solemn sanction of an oath, to render me impartial justice upon the very testimony which had delivered in your hearing before the Court of Inquiry, and from which you "drew an opin-

ion, altogether unfavorable to me." How such conduct can be reconciled with the principles of common honor and justice, is to me inexplicable. Under such circumstances, no consideration, no power or authority on earth, could, or ought to, have forced any liberal high minded man to sit in a case which he had prejudged, and, to retort upon you your own expressions, you must have been "incapable of seeing the glaring impropriety of your conduct, for which, although you do not conceive yourself in any way accountable to me," I hope you will be able to account for it with your God, and your conscience. You say, between you and myself, there never has been a personal difference, "and you disclaim all personal enmity towards me." If every step you have taken—every word you have uttered, and every line you have written, in relation to me—if your own admission of the very frequent and free conversations you have had respecting me, and my conduct, "since the affair of the Chesapeake," bear not the plainest stamp of *personal hostility*, I know not the meaning of such terms; were you not under the influence of feelings of this sort, why not, in your official capacity, call me, or have me brought, before a proper tribunal, to answer the charges you have preferred against me, and thereby giving me a chance of defending myself? Why speak injuriously of me to *junior officers* "which you do not deny?" Why the "many frequent and free conversations respecting me and my conduct," which you have taken so much pains to underscore? Why use the insulting expression, that you "entertained, and still do entertain, the opinion that my conduct, as an officer, since that affair has been such as ought forever to bar my readmission into the service," and that, in endeavoring to prevent it, "you conceive you were performing a duty you owe to the service, and were contributing to its respectability?" Why the *threat*, that if I continued the "efforts" you say I have been making, to be "re-employed?" you "certainly should be constrained to continue the expressions of those 'opinions?'"

Does not all this, together with the whole tenor and tendency of your letter, manifest the most marked *personal animosity* against me, which an honorable man, acting under a sense of public duty by which you profess to "have been hitherto actuated," would disdain even to shew, much more to feel?

I shall now, sir, take up the specific charges you have alleged against me, and shall notice them in the order in which they stand. The first is one of a very *heinous* character. It is, that "I proceeded in a merchant brig to Pernambuco," Could I, sir,

during the period of my suspension, have gone any where in a national vessel? Could I, with what was due to my family, have remained idle? The sentence of the Court deprived them of the principal means of subsistence. I was therefore compelled to resort to that description of employment with which I was best acquainted; and on this subject you should have been silent. But you add, that the late Captain Lewis, of the Navy, who had come from a Mr. Goodwin, who heard it from Mr. Lyon, the British Consul at Pernambuco with whom you undertake to say I lived, represented me as stating, "that, if the Chesapeake had been prepared for action, I would not have resisted the attack of the Leopard; assigning, as a reason, that I knew, as also did our government, that there were deserters on board the Chesapeake; and that I said to Mr. Lyon, further, that the President of the United States knew there were deserters on board, and of the intention of the British ship to take them, and that the ship was ordered out under these circumstances, with a view to bring about a contest which might embroil the two nations in a war."

The whole of this, sir, I pronounce to be a falsehood, a ridiculous, malicious, absurd, improbable falsehood, which can never be credited by any man that does not feel a disposition to impress on the opinion of the public that I am an idiot. That I should, two years after the affair of the Chesapeake, make such a declaration when every proof that could be required of a contrary disposition on the part of the Chief Magistrate had been given, cannot receive credit from any one, but those that are disposed to consider me such a character as you would represent me to be. I did not live with Mr. Lyon, nor did I ever hold a conversation with him so indelicate as the one stated in Captain Lewis' letter would have been. And with what object could I have made such a communication? Mr. Lyon would naturally have felt a contempt for a man that would have suffered himself to have been made a tool of in so disgraceful an imposture. I found Mr. Lyon transacting business in Pernambuco; he produced to me a letter from Mr. Hill, the American consul in that country, recommending him as entitled to the confidence of his countrymen, every one of whom, in that port, put their business into his hands. I did the same, and thus commenced our acquaintance; he was kind and friendly to me, but never in any respect indelicate, as would have been, in a high degree; such conversation between us. Of Mr. Goodwin I know nothing. I have never seen him in all my life nor do I conceive that his hearsay evidence can ever be of any kind or

consequence against me; I was the first that informed the President and the Secretary of the Navy, that such a letter was in the Department, even before I had seen it; and, again, if the mere oral testimony of a British agent was to be considered as evidence sufficient to arraign an American officer, I think the navy would quickly be in such a state, as it might be desirable for their nation to place it in. As to the *impressions* made upon the mind of Capt. Lewis, from this *information*, and the "strong remarks" he made upon the subject, which you have thought proper to quote, they by no means establish the *correctness* of that information; but only go to shew the effect it produced upon the mind of an individual, who seems to have imbibed a prejudice against me, no otherwise to be accounted for, except your acquaintance with him. He is now in his grave, and I am perfectly disposed *there* to let him rest; you must, however, have been hard pressed indeed, to be compelled to resort to such flimsy grounds as those, a degree weaker than even a cold handed testimony, to support your charges against me. These communications, you observe, are now in the archives of the Navy Department. Of this fact, sir, I had long been apprised; and had you, when searching the records of that Department for documents to injure my character, looked a little further back, you would perhaps have found others calculated to produce a very different effect. Of my desire to return to the United States, during the late war, there are certificates in the Navy Department of the first respectability, which, if you had been disposed to find and quote, are perhaps laying on the same shelf from whence you took those, that you appear so anxious to bring to public view; I mean my letter applying for service, as soon as an opportunity offered, after the term of my suspension expired; and one letter, above all, you should not have passed over unnoticed, that which you received from my hand of May 1805, addressed to the Secretary of the Navy, which was one of the principal causes of your obtaining the first command that you were ever honored with, and as you may have forgotten it, I will remind you, on this occasion, that, but one month previous to the date of that letter, I, by advice and arguments, saved you from resigning the service of your country in a pet, because you were removed from the first lieutenancy of the New-York, to that of second of the Chesapeake; but all this and much more is now forgotten by you, yet there are others that recollect those circumstances, and the history of your conduct to me will outlive you, let my fate be what it may. The

affair of the Chesapeake did certainly "excite," and ought to have excited the indignant feelings of the nation towards Great Britain; but, however it may have justified a declaration of war against that power, it was not as you assert "every one admits," one of the principal causes of the late war. That did not take place, sir, until *five years* after, when that affair had been amicably, and of course honorably, adjusted between the two nations. I mention this fact, not on account of its importance, but because you have laid so much stress on that "affair," as a reason why I ought to have returned home during the late war, and to shew that, although it *did* happen to be your fortunate lot to have an opportunity of being in the foremost rank, on that occasion, of which you seem inclined to vaunt, you are ignorant even of the causes which led to it.

Having, in your letter of the 5th inst. abandoned the charge of my having sailed under "British licence," after the commencement of the late war, in consequence of information received by you from a gentleman entitled to the fullest credit, that I was not absent, until after the peace; consequently the report which you noticed of my having sailed under British licence, must be unfounded. I have only to remark, on this head, that, in advancing a charge against me of so serious a nature, and designed and so well calculated, as it was, to affect materially my reputation, not only as an officer of the navy, but as a citizen of the United States; but should first have ascertained that it was founded on *fact*, and not on rumour, which you *harpoon*; and that upon a proper investigation you would have discovered your other accusation to be equally groundless. For my not returning home during the late war, I do not hold myself, to use your own expressions, "in any way accountable to you sir. It would be for the government, I would suppose, to take notice of my absence, if they deemed it reprehensible; and they no doubt would have done so, had not the circumstances of the case, in their estimation, justified it. That they are perfectly satisfied upon this point, I have good reason to believe, and trust I shall be able to satisfy my country also. The President's personal conduct to me, and the memorial of the Virginia Delegation in Congress, to him, prove how I stand with those high characters, your opinion, notwithstanding, to the contrary. I deny, Sir, that I ever was "urged" to do so by any one. Laying patriotism out of the question, as you observe, as well as the reasons why you think "it behooved me" to adopt that course, there were other incentives strong enough, God knows, to excite a desire on my part to return;



and I should have returned, Sir but for circumstances beyond my control, which is not incumbent on me to explain to you.

Had the many opportunities really presented themselves which you allege were "every day occurring," of which I might have availed myself to return to my country, in privateers or other fast sailing merchant vessels, from France and other places, but of which you produce no other proof than random assertion, on which most of your other charges rest? There were no such opportunities, as you say were "every day occurring;" no, not one within my reach, and for some considerable time after the news of the war arrived in Denmark it was not believed that it would continue six months; but, if I had received the slightest intimation from the department that I should have been employed on my return, I should have considered no sacrifice too great, no exertion within my power should have been omitted to obtain so desirable an object, as any mark of my country's confidence would have been to me in such a moment; but what hope had I, when my letter of application for service was not even honored by an answer. In regard to John Adams, I do not deem it proper on this occasion to explain my reasons for making the attempt to return in that ship; but whenever I am called on by any person properly authorised to make the enquiry, I am confident that I shall convince them, that I had good reason to believe that I should obtain a passage in her, notwithstanding your great knowledge on the occasion.

You say, by absenting myself, for years from the country, without leave from the government, I "subjected myself to be stricken from the rolls." I knew also, by the 10th article of the act for the better government of the navy, that all persons in the navy holding intercourse with an enemy, because subject to the severest punishment known to the law; and that, for these offences, as you are pleased to term them, "I have not received, to your knowledge, even a reprimand;" but I presume if I have not it is not your fault. What kind and humane forbearance this, after what I have already endured! But, sir, as you seem to be so very intelligent upon other points, pray tell me where was the necessity of my asking for a furlough until the period of my suspension expired, or even after having reported myself for duty without being noticed. As to the charge of my holding intercourse with the enemy, I am at a loss to conceive to what you allude, and should degrade myself by giving it any other reply than to pronounce it—if you mean to insinuate there was any unlawful or improper communication on my part with the government, or any individual

of Great Britain, as a *false and foul aspersion* on my character, which no conduct or circumstance of my life, however it might be tortured by your malice or ingenuity, can, in any manner, justify or support. You say, also, that you *do know* "that my pay, even during my absence, was *continued to me*." It is not the fact, sir; I never, and until very recently since my return, received but half pay. This part of your letter I should not have regarded, were it not to shew with what boldness, facility, and *sans froid*, you can make assertions unstained by the shadow of truth; but, if you had made yourself acquainted with the circumstances relative to my *half pay* you would have found that not one cent of it was received by me. The government was so good as to pay the amount to my unfortunate female family, whose kindest entertainment you have frequently enjoyed. Poor unfortunate children! whose ancestors, every man of them, did contribute every disposable shilling of their property, many of them their lives, and all of them their best exertions, to establish the independence of their country, should now be told that the small amount of my half pay was considered, by an officer of high rank, too much for them! You have been good enough to inform me that, on my return to this country, my "*efforts*," as you have been pleased to call them, "to re-estate myself in the service were known, and became a subject of conversation with officers, as well as others;" and, but for those "*efforts*," it is *more than probable* you would not have spoken of me. This would indeed have displayed a wonderful degree of lenity and courtesy on your part, of which I could not have failed to be duly sensible. But, sir, I beg leave to ask how, and where, did you get your information, that such "*efforts*" were made by me; and even admit they were, why should you *alone*, disclaiming, as you pretend to do, all "*personal enmity*" against me, have made yourself so *particularly busy* on the occasion? Was it because your inflated pride led you to believe that the weight of your influence was greater than that of any other officer of the navy, or that you were more tenacious of its honor "*and respectability*," than the rest of the officers were? You assure me, however, that, in the interchange of opinion with other officers respecting me, you have never met with more than one who did not *entirely* concur with you in the opinion you have expressed of me." Indeed! and what is the reason? It is because I suppose you are most commonly attended by a train of dependents, who, to enjoy the sunshine of your favor, act as *enterers* for your vanity; and revolving around you like *satellites*, borrow their chief

consequence from the countenance you may *condescend* to bestow upon them.

You, at length, arrive at the main point; the "object" of my letter of the 23d ultimo, which you might have reached by a much *shorter route*, and have saved me the fatigue of being compelled, in self defence, to travel with you so far as you have gone. The language of defiance, represented to have been used by you, 'that you would cheerfully meet me in the field, and hoped I would yet act like a man,' are disavowed by you. And you further deny having ever invited me to the field, or expressed a hope that I would call you out; but you observe that, 'being informed by a gentleman with whom I had *conferred* upon the subject, that I left Norfolk, for the seat of government, some time before our June correspondence, with the intention of calling you out, you stated to that gentleman, as you have to *all others* with whom you have conversed upon the subject, that, if I made the call, you would meet me; but that, upon all scores, you would be much better pleased to have nothing to do with me.' I certainly do not *exactly* know who that intermeddling gentleman was, with whom you say I "conferred;" but, if I may be allowed to conjecture, I think I can recognize in him the self same officious gentleman, who, I am creditably informed, originated the report of your having made use of the gasconading expressions you have disowned:—In this respect I may be mistaken. Be this, however, as it may, I never gave him, or any other person, to understand that my visit to Washington last spring was for the purpose of "calling you out," nor *did* I go there with *any such view*.

How you can reconcile your affecting indifference towards me, in the remark "that, on all scores, you would be much better pleased to have nothing to do with me," with the very active part which, it is generally known, and which your own letter clearly evinces, you have taken against me, I am at a loss to conceive. No, sir, you feel not so much unconcern as you pretend and wish it to be believed you do, in regard to the course of conduct my honor and my injuries may, in my judgment, require me to pursue. You have a *motive*, not to be concealed from the world, for all you have done or said, or for any future endeavours you may make, to bar my "re-admission" into the service. It is true you have never given me a direct, formal, and written invitation to meet you in the field, such as one gentleman of honor *ought* to send to another. But, if your own admissions, that you had "incautiously said you would meet me if I wished it," and "that if you had not

*pledged yourself*, you might reconsider the subject," and all this too without any provocation on my part, or the most distant intimation from me, that I had a desire to meet you, do not amount to a challenge. I cannot comprehend the object or import of such declarations—made as they were in the face of the world; and to those in particular, whom you knew would not only communicate them to me, but give them circulation; under all the circumstances of the case, I consider you as having thrown down the gauntlet, and I have no hesitation in accepting it. This is, however, a point which it will not be for you or me to decide, nor do I view it as of any other importance than as respects the privilege allowed to the challenged party in relation to the choice of weapons, distance, &c. about which I feel not more "fastidious." I assure you, sir, than you do; nor do I claim any advantage whatever which I have no right to insist upon; could I stoop so low as to solicit any, I know you too well to believe you would have any inclination to concede them. All I demand is to be placed upon equal grounds with you; such as two honorable men may decide upon, as *just and proper*. Upon the subject of duelling, I perfectly coincide with the opinions you have expressed. I consider it as a barbarous practice which ought to be exploded from civilized society; but, sir, there may be causes of such extraordinary and aggravated insult and injury, received by an individual, as to render an appeal to arms, on his part, absolutely necessary; mine I conceive to be a case of that description, and I feel myself constrained, by every tie that binds me to society, by all that can make life desirable to be, to resort to this mode of obtaining that redress due to me at your hands, as the only alternative which now seems to present itself for the preservation of my honor.

To conclude: you say, "from my manner of proceeding, it appears to you that I have come to the determination to fight some one, and that I have selected you for that purpose." To say nothing of the vanity you display, and the importance you seem to attach to yourself, in thus intimating, that being resolved to *fight myself* into favor, I could no otherwise do so than by fixing upon you, the very reverse of which you infer is the fact; I never wished to fight in this way, and had you permitted me to remain at rest, I should not have disturbed you; I should have pursued the "even tenor of my way," without regarding you at all.—But this would not have suited your ambitious views. You have *hunted* me out, have persecuted me with all the power and influence of your office, and have declared your determination to attempt to drive me from the navy,

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if I should make any "efforts" to be employed, and for what purpose, or from what other motive than to obtain my rank, I know not: if my life will give it to you, you shall have an opportunity of obtaining it. And now, sir, I have only to add, that, if you make known your determination, and the name of your friend, I will give that of mine, in order to complete the necessary arrangements to a final close of this affair. I can make no other apology for the apparent tardiness of this communication, than merely to state, that, being on very familiar terms with my family, out of tenderness to their feelings, I have written under great restraint.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BARRON.

No. 10.

WASHINGTON, 29th December, 1819

Sir: Your communication of the 30th ultimo reached me as I was on the eve of my departure for the north; whence I did not return till the 23d instant. It was my determination, on the receipt of your letter, not to notice it; but, upon more mature reflection, I conceive, that as I have suffered myself to be drawn into this unprofitable discussion, I ought not to leave the false coloring and calumnies, which you have introduced into your letter, unanswered. You state, that a much more laconic reply to your letter of 23d October would have served your purpose. Of this I have no doubt; and to have insured such an answer, you had only to make a laconic call. I had already informed you of the course I had felt myself bound to pursue respecting you, and of the reasons which induced my conduct, and that, if you required it, I would overcome my own disinclination, and fight you. Instead of calling me out for injuries which you chose to insist that I have heaped upon you, you have thought fit to enter into this war of words.

I reiterate to you, that I have not challenged, nor do I intend to challenge you. I do not consider it essential to my reputation that I should notice any thing which may come from you, the more particularly, when you declare your sole object in wishing to draw the challenge from me, is, that you may avail yourself of the advantages which rest with the challenged. It is evident, that you think, or your friends for you, that a fight will help you but, in fighting, you wish to incur the least possible risk. Now, sir, not believing that a fight of this nature will raise me at all in public estimation, but may even have a contrary effect, I do not feel at all disposed to remove the difficulties that lay in your way. If we fight, it must be of your seeking; and

you must take all the risk and all the inconvenience which usually attend the challenger in such cases.

You deny having made the communication to the British consul at Pernambuco, which Capt Lewis and Mr. Goodwin have represented. The man capable of making such a communication, would not hesitate to deny it; and, until you can bring forward some testimony, other than your own, you ought not to expect that the testimony of those gentlemen will be credited. As to the veracity of the British consul, I can prove, if necessary, that you have, yourself, vouched for that.

Your offer, as your excuse for not returning to your country, during our war with England, that you had not been invited home by the then Secretary, notwithstanding you had written him, expressive of your wishes to be employed. You state, that, if you had received the slightest intimation from the Department, that you would have been employed on your return, you would have considered no sacrifice too great, no exertion within your power should have been omitted to obtain so desirable an object." From this I would infer, that, in consequence of not receiving this intimation, you did not make the exertions in your power to return, and this I hold to be an insufficient excuse. You do not pretend to have made any attempt, except by the way of the cartel, the John Adams. You cannot believe, that reporting yourself to the Department, at a distance of 4000 miles, when the same conveyance which brought your letter would have brought yourself, will be received as evincing sufficient zeal to join the arms of your country: and, besides, you say it was not believed, for a considerable time after the news of the war arrived in Denmark, that the war would last six months. With those impressions, you must have known, that it would have occupied at least that time for your letter to have arrived at the Department, you to receive an answer, and then repair to America. You deny that the opportunities of returning were frequent. The custom house entries at Baltimore and New-York alone, from the single port of Bordeaux, will show nearly an hundred arrivals: and it is well known, that it required only a few days to perform the journey from Copenhagen to Bordeaux, by the ordinary course of post. You deny having been advised to return to this country, by your friends, during the war. Mr. Cook, of Norfolk, your relative, says, he wrote to you to that effect; and Mr. Forbes, then our consul at Copenhagen, who is now at this place, says he urged you in person to do so.

You have charged the officers who concur with me in opinion respecting your claims to service, as being my satellites. I think I am not mistaken, when I inform you, that all the officers of our grade, your superiors as well as inferiors, with the exception of one, who is your junior, concur in the opinion, that you ought not to be employed again, whilst the imputations, which now lie against you, remain: nor have they been less backward than myself in expressing their opinions.

Your charge of my wishing to obtain your rank, will apply to all who are your juniors, with as much force as to myself. You never have interfered with me in the service, and, at the risk of being esteemed by you a little vain, I must say, I do not think you ever will. Were I disposed to kill out of my way, as you have been pleased to insinuate, those who interfere with my advancement, there are others, my superiors, who I consider fairly barring my pretensions; and it would serve such purpose better, to begin with them. You say, you were the means of obtaining me the first commission I ever had in the service. I deny it; I feel that I own my standing in the service to my own exertions only.

Your statement, that your advice prevented me from resigning on a former occasion, is equally unfounded. I have never, since my first admission into the navy, contemplated resigning; and, instead of being ordered, as you state, from the 1st lieutenantcy of the New York, to the 2d of the Chesapeake, Comm. Chauncey, who was then flag captain, can testify, that I was solicited to remain as 1st lieutenant of the flag ship; and I should have remained as such, had it not been for the demand which the government of Malta made, for the delivery of the persons who had been concerned in the affair of honor, which led to the death of a British officer. It was deemed necessary to send all the persons implicated in that affair out of the way; and I went home in the Chesapeake, as a passenger.

You have been pleased to allude to my having received the hospitality of your family. The only time I recollect to have been at your house, was, on my arrival from the Mediterranean in the Congress, fourteen years past. You came on-board, and dined with me; and invited the Tunisian ambassador and myself to spend the evening with you at Hampton. I accepted your invitation. You having now remitted me of it, tends very much towards removing the weight of obligation I might otherwise have felt on this score.

You speak of the good conduct of your ancestors. As, your own conduct is under discussion, and not theirs, I cannot see how their former good character can at all serve your

present purpose. Fortunately for our country, every man stands upon his own merit.

You state that the "Virginia delegation in Congress" had presented a memorial in your favor. I would infer from this, that all, or the greater part, of the Virginia delegation had interposed in your behalf. This, sir, is not the fact. A few of them, I am informed, did take an interest in your case; but, being informed of the charges existing against you, of which they were before unapprised, they did not press farther your claims. From the knowledge I have of the high-minded gentlemen that compose the Virginia delegation, if they would take the trouble to examine your case, I should, for my own part, be entirely satisfied to place the honor of the service upon their decision.

You offer as your excuse for permitting four months to intervene between our June correspondence (with which, from your letter, you appeared to be satisfied) and your letter of 23d October, your indisposition. I am authorized in saying, that, for the greater part of the four months, you were out attending to your usual avocations.

Your offering your life to me would be quite affecting, and might (as you evidently intend) excite sympathy, if it were not ridiculous. It will not be lost sight of, that your jeopardizing your life depends upon yourself, and not upon me; and is done with a view to fighting your own character up. I have now to inform you, that I shall pay no further attention to any communication you may make to me, other than a direct call to the field.

Your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

To Commodore James Barron,  
Hampton, Virginia.

No. 11.

Norfolk, January 16th, 1820.

Sir: Your letter of the 29th ult. I have received. In it you say that you have now to inform me that you shall pay no further attention to any communication that I may make to you other than a direct call to the field; in answer to which I have only to reply, that whenever you will consent to meet me on fair and equal grounds, that is, such as two honorable men may consider just and proper, you are at liberty to view this as that call; the whole tenor of your conduct to me justifies this course of proceeding on my part; as for your charges and remarks, I regard them not, particularly your sympathy; you know not such a feeling—I cannot be suspected of making the attempt to excite it. I am, sir, yours, &c. JAMES BARRON.

To Com. Stephen Decatur, Washington.

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## No. 12

WASHINGTON, January 24, 1820

Sir: I have received your communication of the 16th, and am at a loss to know what your intention is. If you intended it as a challenge, I accept it, and refer you to my friend com. Bainbridge, who is fully authorized by me to make any arrangement he pleases, as regards weapons, mode, or distance.

Your obedient servant,

STEPHEN DECATUR.

Com. James Barron.

## No. 13.

NORFOLK, February 6, 1820.

Sir: Your letter of the 29th December found me confined to bed, with a violent bilious fever, and it was eight days after its arrival before I was able to read it; the fever, however, about that time left me, and my convalescence appeared to promise a moderately quick recovery. I, therefore, wrote you my note of the 16th ultimo; in two days after I relapsed, and have had a most violent attack, which has reduced me very low, but as soon as I am in a situation to write, you shall hear from me to the point. I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES BARRON.

Com. Stephen Decatur, Washington.

## 1st SESSION—16th CONGRESS.

## IN SENATE.

MARCH 29.

## THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. JOHNSON, of Ken. submitted the following resolution, for consideration:

Resolved, That the committee on the District of Columbia be instructed to enquire into the expediency of allowing to the said District a Delegate in Congress, upon a footing with the Delegates from the several territorial governments.

Mr. JOHNSON remarked that, while he was a member of the other house, he saw the necessity, and introduced a resolution which had for its object the representation of the people of the distant territory of Michigan, by admitting them to send a delegate to Congress. The law which originated from that resolution, admitting a delegate to Congress. The law which originated from that resolution, admitting a delegate to Congress, had produced the most salutary consequences, in relieving Congress from its attention to local detail, without any correct data, and in a vindication of the rights of that territorial government by its immediate representative. He said, a long attention to the same subject had convinced him of the equal necessity of allowing to the District of Columbia a delegate upon a footing with the territorial governments.

The position of Congress in the midst of this people, does not furnish us with corresponding means of correct information; nor had he ever discovered less necessity for an appeal to a delegate for the legislation of this district than a distant territory, for when any subject was brought before Congress the citizens who felt most interested in the measure would make their communication, and always pre-

sent a diversity of opinions, which at one produced a difficulty, which would not exist, if the population had a right to elect a delegate to attend their interests; and as it respects the population of the District, disfranchised from the great and essential principles of self government by the federal constitution, they are entitled to this consideration. It is our duty, said, Mr. J. to give them all we can, consistently with the conditions and terms of the constitution. As it respects the Congress, we well know that the burthen of detail and local matter, in legislation not only protracts our sessions but draws the mind from the investigation of more important national objects. The District of Columbia, although ten miles square, has a growing population, now amounting to upwards of 30,000 souls, and Congress is vested with the power of exclusive legislative department. It is a complete political corporation, and requires much time to mature systems, and pass laws for the purposes of promoting their prosperity and happiness.

He hoped that there would be no objection to the enquiry. The resolution lies on the table.

The Senate, on the motion of Mr. ELLIOT, resumed the consideration of the bill to remit the duties on certain goods consumed by the late fire at Savannah.

Mr. ELLIOT addressed the Senate in support of the bill; and, having been amended, the bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time.

The House resumed the consideration of the military appropriation bill—the question on increasing the appropriation for the Quarter-Master General's Department, from 450,000 to 500,000 dollars, being still under consideration—

Mr. TRIMBLE added some remarks to what he said yesterday, and went into sundry details to shew that the appropriation proposed would be necessary for the Quarter-Master-General's department, independently of any regard to the Missouri expedition; that it would be less than the appropriation for the same service in 1811, when the army was only between five and six thousand men, and no post more distant than Belle Fontaine; that it would be inadequate to the estimates of the Quarter-Master General, whose arrangements had greatly recomised the expenses of his branch of the service, and their execution was indispensable to the public interest.

Mr. SMITH was of opinion, that the expedition for which this appropriation was intended, was inexpedient—if encouraged it would in time draw the whole army from the Atlantic states, which the proper defence of the sea coast would not permit, and where the number now was too small, and involve the necessity of increasing it, in which case the amount now in question would be a mere drop. The post contemplated was not for the protection of our frontiers, because it was too far in the interior of the Indian country, by five or six hundred miles; that intermediate posts must be maintained, and as soon as this line was established, settlers would follow them, right or wrong, and form a string of settlements for 1800 miles, and involve the country in endless broils with the Indians. Thinking thus, though he entertained the highest respect for the authority under which the Expedition was commenced, it was perfectly fair to check it by withholding the appropriation, and thus expressing the sense of the Senate on it.

Mr. DANA stated the object of this expedition as far as the Mandan Villages, taken in connection with the posts up the Mississippi, to be for the

protection of our frontier and the advancement of the north west fur trade, as well as to prevent the influx of foreigners from being carried on with the Indians in that quarter, &c. and he read the report of the Secretary of War to Congress, on this subject, to show more fully the objects and utility of the expedition. To effect these objects, only 20,000 dollars were required, in addition to what would be, without it, necessary, if the expedition remained at the Council Bluffs. He insisted earnestly on the national advantages in view, and which would accrue from it if the expedition should be judiciously executed.

Mr. EDWARDS spoke in reply to Mr. Smith, and by a reference to the character of the trade carried on formerly by the French with the Indians, to obviate the arguments of Mr. S. and to show, in instances, that furs in the Indian country would have the effect of preventing rather than exciting Indian hostilities—neither would they produce illegal settlements on the Indian lands, as such settlements would be prevented by the very means which it was argued would encourage them.

Mr. WINSOR would hesitate, were this a new question; but having been gone into deliberately by the Executive, and as great stress was laid on it, and much good expected from it by that branch of the government, he would not now endeavor to put it down by withholding a small additional sum.

Mr. LEWIS advocated the expedition, and spoke of the great importance of the fur trade, and the immense extent of that which would be opened by this expedition, and which he would not suffer to be usurped by foreign traders, even if were of less value; that to permit the intrusion of foreign traders within our limits was a violation of the rights and the honor, and endangered the safety of the country; to shut them out was necessary to the welfare of the frontiers and the interest of the people; that settlements would follow these posts was admitted, but they would spread to the west in spite of all regulations, until they had reached the Pacific.

Mr. SMITH maintained that, as the laws prohibited settlements on the Indian lands, their violation ought not to be permitted or encouraged by a chain of posts for 1800 miles into the Indian country, and spoke to show the defenceless condition of the forts on the seaboard, in which he adduced several facts, and the inexpediency of drawing off into the west troops necessary to man the maritime works.

The question was then taken on concurring in the amendment reported by the committee of finance, to increase the appropriation for the Quartermaster General's department, from 450,000 to 500,000 dollars, and decided in the affirmative, by yeas and nays, as follows:

YEAS.—Messrs. Dana, Eaton, Edwards, Johnson, of Ken. Johnson, of Lou. King, of Alab. Lanman, Leake, Lloyd, Logan, Lowrie, Noble, Ous, Parrott, Pinkney, Roberts, Sanford, Stokes, Thomas, Trimble, Walker, of Ala. Walker, of Geo. Williams, of Ten. Wilson.—24.

NAYS.—Messrs. Barbour, Brown, Burrill, Dickerson, Elliot, Gilford, King, of N. Y. Macon, Mellen, Morrill, Palmer, Pleasant, Ruggles, Smith, Taylor, Tichenor, Van Dyke, Williams, of Miss.—13.

The amendments were then ordered to be engrossed, and with the bill, to be read a third time.

The engrossed bill appropriating the Representatives from the states of Massachusetts and Maine

in the next Congress, was read a third time, passed, and sent to the other House for concurrence.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MARCH 29.

The House took up and proceeded to consider the resolution submitted by Mr. Taylor on the 25th inst prescribing an order for the consideration of business referred to committees of the whole, and the said resolution being read at the Clerk's table, and modified by the mover, was agreed to by the House as follows:

Resolved, That the business referred to the committee of the whole house, shall be called for consideration in the following order:

1. Private bills which have passed the Senate and have been reported favorably by a committee of the House.

2. Private bills reported by a committee of this House.

3. Bills and resolutions of a public nature.

4. Bills which have passed the Senate and have been reported against by a committee of the House.

5. Reports unfavorable to petitions.

Resolved, That the clerk, under the direction of the Speaker, do arrange the business in the preceding order to-morrow.

On motion of Abbott,

Resolved, That the committee on the judiciary be instructed to enquire into the expediency of passing a law relating to under the circumstances, by what means, private property may be taken for public use, under the emergency of war, and in what manner by which just compensation may be made for the same; also to prescribe the manner in which soldiers may be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, in time of war.

The House resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the state of the Union, and, after some time spent therein, Mr. Speaker resumed the chair and Mr. Taylor reported that the committee of the whole had, according to order, had the state of the Union under consideration, and directed him to report their agreement to the resolution submitted by Mr. Cobb, on the 24th of January last, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the U. S. to prohibit the appointment of members of Congress to offices, with amendments; as, also, their agreement to the resolution of the Senate proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as it respects the Choice of Electors of President and Vice President of the United States and the election of Representatives in the Congress of the United States.

The House took up and proceeded to consider the report of the committee of the whole upon the state of the Union; whereupon it was ordered, that the said resolutions severally lie on the table.

On motion of Mr. Smith of Md.

Resolved, That the committee on the post offices and post roads be instructed to enquire into the expediency of affording some pecuniary relief to the widow and children of John Heaps, mail carrier, killed by the persons who recently robbed the United States mail near Baltimore.

A message in writing was received from the President of the United States, by Mr. J. J. Monroe, his Secretary, which is as follows:

To the House of Representatives.

I transmit to the House of Representatives, in pursuance of their resolution of the 31st of June

ary last, a report from the Secretary of the Treasury, with the documents which accompanied it.

JAMES MONROE.

Washington, 28th March, 1820.

The said message was read, and, together with the report therein communicated, ordered to lie on the table.

The Speaker laid before the House a letter from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting sundry statements in relation to the privateer pension fund which have been prepared in obedience to the resolution of the 15th inst. which was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. ANDERSON, from the committee on public lands, reported a bill for regulating the manner of settling the accounts of the several Deputy Surveyors of Missouri and Arkansas territories, which was twice read and committed.

#### REVOLUTIONARY PENSIONS

Mr. STORRS, from the select committee to whom was recommended the bill to amend the Revolutionary Pension Law, reported a new bill, the better to enable the intentions of the original Law to be carried into effect; which was twice read and committed.

The resolution, recommended by the committee of claims, on the case of William Henderson, for losses sustained during the war, was after debate concurred in by the house. [This claim was rejected.]

#### ATTEMPT TO EXCLUDE the REPORTERS of the NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

Mr. RANDOLPH's motion submitted yesterday to exclude Messrs. Gales and Seaton as reporters from the House, was taken up, and debated for a considerable time. The mover supported his motion in his usual style of prolix, yet playful eloquence; and was followed on the same side by Messrs. Strother and Pindall. Mr. Brush opposed the motion, stating his reasons at large for so doing, and concluded by requesting Mr. Randolph to distinctly state, in a particular manner, his complaint against the said reporters.

Mr. RANDOLPH then, after replying to Mr. Brush, submitted his resolution modified as follows:

Resolved, That Gales & Seaton, having published an incorrect report of the Proceedings of this House of the 23d, not from their own view and hearing thereof, but on the representation of some unknown person, whose name they have refused to give, when thereto required by a member from Virginia—

Therefore, Resolved, That, unless they give up the author of such report, Gales & Seaton, Editors of the National Intelligencer, be excluded from this House as Reporters of the proceedings thereof.

The question on this proposition was decided in the negative as follows, by the yeas and nays being taken: only eight voting in the affirmative, and one hundred and forty in the negative.

[The eight who voted in the negative were chiefs of the Virginia delegation, namely, Messrs. Floyd, Nelson, Pindall, Randolph, B. Smith, and Strother: the two others were Mr. Bayly of Maryland, and Mr. Robertson of Kentucky.]

MARCH 30.

On motion of Mr. STORRS, the committee on Commerce were directed to enquire into the expediency of having a Light House built at Ocracock Inlet in the state of North Carolina.

Mr. SAWYER submitted the following resolve:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to

enquire into the expediency of abolishing such offices of the customs as may be proper to suppress in consequence of their unproductiveness, their inutility, or from any other cause; and that they have leave to report by bill or otherwise.

In submitting the resolution, Mr. S. said he would barely observe that its adoption was so urgently called for, both from the situation of the Treasury, as well as from the disproportion between the services rendered, and the salaries received, by the officers whose posts were contemplated to be suppressed, that he was surprised the subject had not been proposed to this House before. If the resolution were adopted, Mr. S. was sure a saving might be annually made of 7 or 8,000 dollars without the least detriment to the public.

The resolve was ordered to lie on the table.

On motion of Mr. LOWMEYER, it was

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Department of the Navy be directed to inform this House, whether the commander of the Ontario, during her late cruise in the Pacific Ocean, received any present from the Viceroy of Lima, and, if he did, what disposition has been made thereof; whether he received on board the Ontario any citizens or subjects of a foreign power, and any moneys or effects belonging to foreign subjects or citizens to be transported from one foreign port to another; if such foreign subjects were so received, whether any of them were in the military or naval service of governments engaged in war, if any money or effects were so transported, whether any freight was received on that account; and whether any and what instructions have been given by the Department of the Navy, respecting the transportation, in public ships of the United States, of passengers, money, or effects.

The bill from the Senate further to suspend, for a limited time the sale or forfeiture of lands for non-payment of the monies due therefor, was read a third time and passed.

A variety of private bills passed through committee of the whole, and were ordered to be read a third time.

Extract from the documents, transmitted by the President, to Congress on Spanish Affairs, on the 27th inst. The other part will be given on Friday.

The Duke of San Fernando and Quiroga to Mr. Forsyth.

[TRANSLATION.]

To the Minister of the United States:

SIR—In consequence of the decision of the King my master, and in conformity with the communications which my predecessor and I have had the honor to make to you, the moment has arrived when the person of whom His Majesty had made choice, is about to proceed to America, for the purpose of asking of your government the explanations which His Majesty has judged to be indispensable, previous to the ratification by His Majesty of the treaty concluded and signed by Don Luis de Onís.

The Plenipotentiary appointed is the Marechal de Camp Don Francisco Dionisio Vives; a distinguished person, in whom he has given the most ample powers to settle all the difficulties he so earnestly wishes to see removed, and succeeded by the establishment, on a solid basis, of that harmony between Spain and the United States to which their mutual interests so strongly invite them.

As Don Francisco D. Vives will set out immediately on his journey and proceed expeditiously, I consider the measure now communicated to you, and which you will be pleased to make known to your government, as dispensing with any farther discussion here of the points which form the object of the above-named gentleman's present mission, as a confidence of it would only tend to embarrass the course of the direct negotiation about to be established.

I renew to you, sir the assurances of my distinguished respect, and I pray God to preserve you many years!

The Duke of SAN FERNANDO & QUIROGA  
Palace, 16th December, 1819

Extract of a letter from Mr. Gallatin to the Secretary of State, dated Paris, January 22, 1820.

"According to some accounts the intended Minister to the United States left Madrid on the 9th. The British Ambassador here told me that he was still there on the 11th."

Extract of a letter from Mr. Everett, Charge d'Affaires at the Hague, to the Secretary of State, dated Hague, Jan 25, 1820.

"I stated in a late letter, upon the authority of the Spanish Charge d'Affaires here, that Mr. Onís's successor, General Vives, was at Paris, on his way to America. It appears however that he has not yet left Madrid."

#### TRANSLATION.

Extract of a despatch from Count Nesselrode, to Mr. Poletica, Minister of H. I. M. the Emperor of Russia, in the United States, dated 27th Nov. (9th Dec.) 1819.

"You have doubtless been able to obtain information how far the President's last instructions to Mr. Forsyth were positive. The Emperor will not take it upon him to justify Spain, but he charges you to plead, with the Government at Washington, the cause of peace and concord. This Government is too enlightened to take hasty steps, and its rights appear to be too solid, not to be weakened by a violent course of proceeding; and on the other hand, such is the character of the considerations which command the ratification, by Spain, of the arrangement relative to the Floridas, that it is to be hoped she will at length yield to the force of evidence. The United States will then have added to the reputation of an able, that of a moderate policy, and will gather, with security, the fruits of their wisdom. His Imperial Majesty, therefore, wishes that if there be yet time, you would engage the Government at Washington to give to the Spanish Ministry a proof of patience, which its circumstances might indeed seem to suggest. Nevertheless, the Emperor does not interfere in this discussion. He makes, above all, no pretension to exercise an influence in the councils of a foreign power. He merely expresses a wish, dictated by his concern for the general welfare, and worthy of the generous good faith which characterizes the Government of the United States."

#### MINT of the UNITED STATES.

JANUARY 1st, 1820.

Sir,—I have now the honor of laying before you a report of the operations of the Mint during the last year.

From the statement of the Treasurer, it appears that, within the above period, the coinage has been

In gold,	51,723 pieces,	amounting to	\$258,615
In silver,	2,352,000 do do		1,140,000
In copper,	2,671,000 do do		26,110

Amounting to \$1,425,325

Making, in the whole, 5,074,723 pieces.

The amount of coinage would have been considerably greater had a sufficient supply of bullion been regularly furnished; but, for four or five months, no deposits of any consequence were received. During this interval, however, the workmen were advantageously employed in completing and improving the buildings and machinery belonging to the establishment; and the mint is now, it is believed, fully competent to coin all the gold and silver which it is probable will hereafter be received, as well as to carry on the copper coinage to any desirable amount; for, even with a single press, at the rate it is now working, eighty tons (seven and a half millions of cents) may be coined in the course of a year.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your most obedient servant, R. PATTERSON.

JAMES MONROE

President of the United States.

In this week's report of Congressional Proceedings, we are sorry to say that the Bankrupt bill, has been rejected in the Senate. The cause of this defeat is thought to arise chiefly from the circumstance of engrafting a provision for voluntary bankruptcy in the bill, which even the friends of the proposed system objected to. An ineffectual attempt has since been made to reconsider the vote on this question.

The Philadelphia New Theatre, was burnt to the ground on the 2nd inst. and two adjoining houses shared the same fate.

The late London advices inform us of a horrible plot to assassinate the whole of the British cabinet. It was timely discovered and crushed. The story has an air of improbability: some think it has been got up for ministerial purposes.

The revolution in Spain is steadily progressing, a blow has been struck, in which the royalists lost 1000 men, and suffered defeat.

#### DIED,

At his house near Dublin, Ireland, the Right Hon. HENRY GRATTAN, for many years a member of Parliament from the city of Dublin, and one of the most eloquent patriots and statesmen that his native country has produced. Mr. Grattan had reached the advanced age of 78, and was considered as a candidate for the Parliamentary election about to take place under the new sovereign GEORGE, IV. The following character of him has been handed down by one of his countrymen, who admired him while living and who venerates his memory now he is dead: Beloved by all—many sons of Erin have honored the land of their birth, but none more so than Grattan. The most determined asserter of the rights—the redresser of her wrong—the advocate of religious and political liberty, not only Irishmen but men of all countries may well deplore the loss of such a man. Wilberforce lived to see his labors in favor of the African successful—Grattan lived to conduct the Roman Catholics of Ireland in full view of their emancipation; which, it is believed, will be one of the first measures recommended by his present majesty to the new parliament.

[N. Y. Daily Adv.